

**Profitable Poultry
In the
Lower Mimbres Valley**

By Lee O. Paddock.

The Scratch Pen

Assuming you have a good poultry house, or placed your old one in good condition, as was described in last week's Column, the next thing to be considered is that of providing Biddy with the proper facilities to compel her to work all day long for her food. A lazy bird which lays around on a cold day will not fill the egg basket, as her food will have to generate heat to keep the body warm. A hen that is busy scratching for her grain keeps warm by her constant exercising, and her food is properly consumed for making the eggs, as well as maintaining a healthy and vigorous bird, two things that are very essential.

Now when the birds have the acres, more or less, of free range to run over during three seasons of the year, you will find during the winter season that the ground will freeze quite deep and it will be impossible to gather food by scratching. Also the city pool Tryman with his small plant on the railroad has let will have to turn his scratching facilities the entire year.

If the farmer who has a sled or platter is to storing his grain he will place his floor about 18 to 24 inches above the ground, and leave considerable space between the boards used for the floor, he will find a good supply of loose alpine leaves will sift through, which will furnish excellent egg producing food, and scratching material. Place a board around the bottom to prevent the small alpine leaves from blowing away. Scatter some grain each morning, cover it well under the floor, and you will find Biddy there all day long, happy, contented, singing and scratching for her food. Do not forget when Biddy sings, she is asking you to place a nice clean nest evergreen to her pen.

If your alpine platform or sled is located where it will be subjected to high winds, board up two sides, or cover with white ducking. This ducking supported with vertical slats about two feet apart will be best, as it will admit light, if you use boards place several pieces of glass to admit light. Birds do not get a long walk when confined to dark quarters. See that they go to their roosting quarters at night.

If you have a stable, and especially where there is salt in stored over there, or a corral, let your birds run through them at all times.

For the city poultryman or the

farmer who does not have the above facilities, a "scratching pen" must be provided. This pen should be built in the following manner, and should join the house, or roosting quarters on one side and face the south. The rear, which is the side facing the prevailing winds should be not less than the corresponding length of the house, and should be air tight, as your birds will take cold in a day draft as readily as in a night draft. Board up the other three sides about three feet high which will prevent the birds wasting scratching material by throwing it over the sides of the pen. Hay, straw or alfalfa may be used for scratching material, but alfalfa will make the best as it will also furnish green food.

Keep your scratch pen thoroughly clean, and change the scratching material about once each sixty days.

The scratch pen may be covered by extending the house roof, which will provide the birds dry shelter during wet weather, and keep the scratching materials dry.

Nests should be provided for the laying birds, heated carbon fire, and preferably inside the scratch pen, and placed well off the ground. Provide one roost in front of the nests, which will enable the hens to easily enter.

"Trap Nests" are much more profitable than common nests, as they will show the poultryman which pens are laying the eggs, and which are not. The hen which does not lay can be utilized to best advantage on the Sunday dinner table.

Our next article will appear in the next issue of the column, and will treat on "proper care and feeding for winter eggs."

In this article we will tell the advantages to be derived from the use of "trap nests."

Too Much

"Slave," said Abdul-Hamid to his grand vizier, "have the Amorite papers arrived?"

"They have. O incandescent light of the world, mother of the moon and first cousin to the constellations," answered that official.

"Bring them hither."

It was done, and after one glance the Sultan kicked his best hookah out of the window, ordered his favorite dancing girl how stung, and threw the papers at the head of the grand vizier.

"Is it not enough," he roared, "to have the foreigners coming here and collecting money through carelessness, without having my majestic self and my enlightened soul mixed up in the annual Thanksgiving jokes again?"

Snow flakes were seen flying Tuesday morning, the first this winter.

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